The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news materials and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
2 BILLION DOLLARS
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1755 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 48

FDR Hails Labor's Production Feats; Asks Extra Push To Shorten War

New Orleans—President Roosevelt, in a message to the 64th annual convention of the AFL, declared American workers "have done a production job the like of which the world has never seen before" and called upon labor to "stay unceasingly at the production job so as to shorten the war."

His message, addressed to AFL President Green, follows:

"Thank you very much for your sincere and cordial invitation to attend and address the sixty-fourth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor. I feel accordingly that I cannot be with you in New Orleans, but the job of going ahead with the war makes it impossible for me to do so at this time.

"The war job is of first importance and concern to all of us, to American soldiers, sailors and marines who are winning it on land and sea and in the skies all over the world, to American workers, to American employers and to American farmers. It is the task of us at home to leave nothing undone so that our fighting men may continue gaining their glorious victories on every front.

"We have been discharging that high duty in a very full measure. American working men and women have done a production job the like of which the world has never seen before. They have supplied our fighters with the finest weapons in record quantities, weapons with which they are beating the enemy and with which they will keep on beating him everywhere they meet.

"American employers with their ingenuity and drive and American farmers with their industry and patience have shared with American working men and women in getting done so well the job of producing the weapons, materials and supplies needed by American fighting men. We have all worked to that end and it has paid off in victories and the saving of lives. We can and we must stay unceasingly at the production job so as to shorten the war.

"I know there will be no letdown in this task by any group of patriotic Americans and I know that such cooperation will continue after the war is won, so that we can have a peace for which we will be just and lasting and in the interest of safety, protection and well-being of generations yet unborn.

"Please extend my greetings and best wishes for a successful meeting to those attending your annual convention.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT."

Workers Paid Glowing Tributes By Marshall, Eisenhower, MacArthur

New Orleans—The part played by American workers on the production front drew glowing tributes from the nation's highest military leaders in messages sent to the American Federation of Labor's annual convention here.

The Army chiefs also pleaded for still greater production to keep the enemy on the run, and President William Green in reply promised the armed services that labor will go the limit in meeting the expanding requirements of the fighting forces.

Messages from the military chieftains follow in part:

General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff—"The record in the greatest production race in history represents a tremendous achievement. You have made possible the overwhelming superiority in supplies and equipment that has enabled our Army and those of our allies to wrest the initiative from the enemy in every theatre of war. . . .

"Despite these achievements at home and abroad, we are forced to view the future with deep concern. The very speed of our advance has created new production problems which demand herculean effort on the part of all our people in the months ahead. . . .

"Today we must maintain a raging battle along a thousand miles of front in Europe and a steadily increasing scale of operations in the Pacific. Tomorrow, next week and next month, more and more troops will pour into the battle, and more and more shells, bombs and other munitions will be necessary, yet a prodigious effort is being made by our Army. An equally prodigious effort must be made here at home."

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander of allied forces in Europe—"I want to assure you that we all know and appreciate the part that American labor has played in supporting our efforts. . . . But the battle is not yet done. We are now through fighting, nor are the workers. We on the battle fronts and they at the benches, in the mines and fields of America must carry on until the enemy is completely defeated in battle." This message from Eisenhower was brought to the convention by Holt Ross, who served as AFL fraternal delegate to the last meeting of the British Trades Union Congress and visited the fronts in Europe.

General Douglas MacArthur, chief of our forces in the South Pacific—"Labor has been the infantryman of the mighty war now raging than the rifleman who fights. Without you we would not wage for victory. You have begun now. A comprehensive social security program must offer old-age security and insurance protection to all workers and their families—not only to wage earners in private industry and commerce.

"Today, workers are protected against the risks of old age and death. Why not against sickness? Why not against permanent disability?

"We must expand our medical service, our unemployment compensation; enforce child labor laws; multiply vocational opportunities. Today, we are spending less than 1 per cent of our national income for all our social security programs. A less prosperous Great Britain is planning to spend 10 per cent of its national income for social security."

While concentrating all effort on meeting the production goals of the armed forces, America should not neglect planning for post-war security and full employment, McNutt insisted.

"Social security measures must have to be strengthened, and we should not wait for victory before we begin now. A comprehensive social security program must offer old-age security and insurance protection to all workers and their families—not only to wage earners in private industry and commerce.

"Today, workers are protected against the risks of old age and death. Why not against sickness? Why not against permanent disability?

"We must expand our medical service, our unemployment compensation; enforce child labor laws; multiply vocational opportunities. Today, we are spending less than 1 per cent of our national income for all our social security programs. A less prosperous Great Britain is planning to spend 10 per cent of its national income for social security."

McNutt Lashes At Propagandists Who Blame Labor For Shortages

New Orleans—Chairman Paul V. McNutt of the War Manpower Commission, in an address at the annual convention of Labor convention here, lashed out at anti-labor propagandists who seek to blame the workers for temporary lags in war production.

"North, South, East and West, the labor-haters and labor-baiters have been crepe hanging," he said. "Wherever there is a smokestack, they can be seen digging graves for labor. Fortunately for labor and country, no busy smashing production records to tie down in the grave so proved.

"Shortages in trucks and other 'must' goods of war are not due to the indifference of the American workers. They are due almost exclusively to military developments, to the unpredictable hurtle of the war.

Constant changes in Army plans, caused by experiments to win a speedy expanded schedules; low wages in some industries—these are among the factors blamed by McNutt for current lags in output.

"Today, workers are protected against the risks of old age and death. Why not against sickness? Why not against permanent disability?

"We must expand our medical service, our unemployment compensation; enforce child labor laws; multiply vocational opportunities. Today, we are spending less than 1 per cent of our national income for all our social security programs. A less prosperous Great Britain is planning to spend 10 per cent of its national income for social security."

Labor's Fight On Pressure Groups Helped Hold Price Line, Bowles Says

New Orleans—Delegates to the American Federation of Labor's convention here heard OPA Administrator Chester Bowles give credit to labor for the Administration's success in beating back attempts of pressure groups to break down price controls.

"Throughout the long fight to maintain our control over rents and prices we have had the vigorous support of organized labor and other consumer groups," Bowles said. "Without this support we couldn't have done the job.

"Organized labor's support of price control, rent control and rationing has been an invaluable aid to the war effort. It ranks second in importance only to labor's record on the production front."

Bowles let it be known that when civilian production is expanded after the war some back into production, the OPA intends to hold their prices to the level of early 1942. That can be done even though wages and prices of raw materials may have increased during the period.

"We know from our experience that industry can absorb considerable increases in material prices and wage rates without compensating raise in prices, and still maintain handsome profits," Bowles declared.

AFL Convention Demands FDR Break Wage Freeze; Makes New Bid For Unity To CIO And Mine Workers

American Legion Commander and Green Join In Plea For Effective Program to Aid G. I. Joes On Post-War

New Orleans—Organized labor's championship of the interests of the G. I. Joes was highlighted by a number of dramatic developments at the American Federation of Labor's convention here.

Outstanding were:

1. Appearance of Edward N. Scheiberling, new national commander of the American Legion, who in an unusually friendly talk welcomed collaboration between the federation and legion for the welfare of the nation's fighting men.

2. A pledge by President William Green that the AFL will "fight again, and again" to see that the "vets" get every bit of protection to which they are entitled.

3. Praise given by the Army of five wounded war veterans, all of them AFL union members, who told the delegates how greatly the men at the front appreciate the vast outpouring of munitions and supplies made by American workers.

Scheiberling's address was one of the highlights of the convention. In introducing him, President Green revealed that the legion chief is the son of a veteran unionist—the late Martin Scheiberling, who served as business agent of Local 201 of the Painters Union in Albany, N. Y., for 10 years, and on the legislative committee of the New York State Federation of Labor for 16 years.

Legion chiefs for the past two years have been occasionally hostile to labor and President Green frankly alluded to that, declaring it was "refreshing" by contrast to present a commander like Scheiberling, "the noble son of a noble father."

With equal frankness, Scheiberling made it clear that under legion laws he would only serve for one year, and "what the next legion leader will do to you I do not know."

But he made it clear that insofar as he was concerned, "there isn't any reason why the American Legion and the American Federation of Labor should not always be close friends."

Scheiberling emphasized the "broad objectives" upon which the two organizations are united.

"Both organizations are steadfast in their effort to assure an enduring peace after total victory," he said. "Both organizations are determined to preserve the economic system that has made it possible for the United States to be the arsenal of democracy. Both organizations are dedicated to assuring full opportunity—jobs in accord with capabilities, and care for disabled—veterans get their jobs back when they return.

Scheiberling added he "would like to see, among those drafting the formula for world peace, representatives of our fighting forces and representatives of those who are producing the tools of war—working together united at the peace table."

When the commander finished, Green declared, "We like the note which he sounded," and urged teamwork between the two organizations despite whatever differences of opinion may arise.

Green assured Scheiberling that the AFL is determined to see that war veterans get their jobs back when they return.

"As comrades in arms, when they come back home we will share with them the work opportunities that we find," Green said. "We want to see that a grateful nation protects them against the pangs of poverty and suffering when they come back to America."

Five Wounded AFL War Veterans' Cheered By Convention Delegates

New Orleans—Five wounded war veterans, members of AFL unions, won enthusiastic cheers when they were presented to the AFL convention here and made brief talks about their battle experiences.

The war heroes, now recuperating at hospitals near here, were introduced by Secretary-Treasurer Meany. Col. A. H. Raskin of the N. Y. Harrod, Clear had submitted an interesting talk on the progress of the fighting in Europe. The names of the heroes and a brief summary of their records follow:

Sgt. Philip Sharp, of York, Pa., who was wounded in the head while serving with the 99th Infantry Division near St. Lo, France. Captured by the Germans and held prisoner in a French hospital for 20 days before our troops liberated the town in which he was being held. Member of the AFL Teamsters Union.

P. F. C. Ferdinand Longo, of New Orleans, who served for 19 months in North Africa and Italy. Twice wounded—at Casabe and again at Anzio. Before entering service worked as machinists' helper, making Liberty ships at Delta Shipbuilding Company here. Member of the AFL Machinists Union.

Cpl. Louis Augustin, of New Orleans, who saw 26 months of action in the Aleutians driving a bulldozer to build advance air strips. Suffered severe burns when some of his bulldozer exploded on the edge of a 500-foot cliff. Leaped to safety as machine plunged over edge. Member of the AFL Carpenters Union.

Cpl. Robert Coursey, of Peoria, Ill., driver of a Quartermaster truck delivering supplies to front lines. Served 27 months in England, North Africa, Sicily and Italy. Participated in the Battle of Salerno Plain. Severely burned in gasoline explosion. Member of AFL Carpenters Union.

Sgt. Edward Rhoades, of Woodburn, Oreg., who served for one year at an American air base in the South Atlantic. As a Diesel mechanic, he helped build runways on volcanic island which many engineers had pronounced incapable of being adapted for air use. After a year with no fresh fruit or vegetables and no milk and with only one canteenful of water a day for drinking, washing and all other purposes, he was invalided home. Member of the AFL Carpenters Union.

Keenan Lauds Labor's Record

New Orleans—The past four years has "seen the greatest feat of industrial production the world has ever known," Joseph P. Keenan, vice chairman of the War Production Board, told the American Federation of Labor's convention.

"There has been a complete reversal of the whole face of war. The most world-wide, destructive war man has ever known. There is much yet to be done—and security for ourselves is to produce and keep on producing the full needs of our fighting forces.

Keenan insisted that while labor is going all-out for victory, planning for full employment after the war must also be undertaken.

"If we are to avoid a depression after the war and resulting widespread misery, if we are to prove to our workers and soldiers that their toil and sacrifice were not in vain," he said, "then we must make sure that after the war there will be enough jobs to go around and wages high enough to permit workers to buy the goods and services they must have to live at decent levels.

"The only way that we can do this is to plan for post-war production to be carried on at levels high enough to provide jobs for all who want to work."

Broad Social Security Drive Urged

New Orleans—Forty-four states, which hold legislative sessions next year, have been asked by the Social Security Board to establish maximum unemployment benefits of at least $25 a week. A. J. Altmeyer, chairman of the board, revealed in a talk to the American Federation of Labor's convention.

Altmeyer said the board has also urged the states to provide benefit payments for at least 26 weeks; to extend the jobless insurance laws to all employers, regardless of size, and to eliminate restrictive provisions which will deprive many war workers of unemployment benefits when they are laid off.

Action by Congress to bring federal and maritime workers under unemployment insurance protection was also advocated by Altmeyer.

Altmeyer for the first time disclosed publicly that the board has worked out a plan by which retired workers, who have returned to the jobs during the war, will receive higher old-age pensions when they again retire. Also, a plan has been developed whereby private workers, who have taken federal civil service jobs during the war, will retain their rights under the Social Security Act, Altmeyer said.

AFL OPENS NEW DRIVE FOR 30-HOUR WEEK

New Orleans—The American Federation of Labor's battle for the 30-hour week as a peace-time standard was renewed at the federations annual convention as a post-war "must."

Delegates adopted a resolution calling for inauguration of the 30-hour week by legislation immediately after the war so as to spread available jobs and bring about full employment.

The report cited the vast army of displaced war workers and returning soldiers for whom jobs will have to be found when victory is won.

"Since full employment is the first necessity in maintaining a well-balanced economy and in insuring stability to our democratic institutions, every attention should be given to shortening the hours of employment," the convention declared.

AFL Unions Pledge Boost In Needed War Equipment

New Orleans.—Responding to war emergency needs, the American Federation of Labor, pledged the nation's armed forces quick action to meet demands for increased production of critical fighting equipment.

AFL President William Green organized a new drive on the production front to supply urgent requirements of the American armies fighting to crush Hitler.

Immediately after Gen. Brehon Somervell had outlined the army's needs, Mr. Green summoned a conference of union leaders at which plans were drawn to funnel "shock troops" of skilled and unskilled workers to the plants where additional manpower is required to deliver the goods.

Union chiefs taking part included: President Harvey W. Brown of the International Association of Machinists, President Harry Stevenson of the International Molders' and Foundry Workers, President David Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and President Anthony Valente of the United Textile Workers.

Colonel A. H. Raskin of the army service forces submitted a partial list of the plants where the most acute manpower are greatest. He will follow up with a complete list. Products in which shortages are most crucial, Raskin let it be known, are heavy trucks, ammunition, castings for heavy trucks, small arms and cotton duck for tents.

Reporting the results of the conference, Mr. Green told newsmen that the Union leaders are pledged to do all in their power to supply the additional manpower necessary to do the job.

"The response to these men and women of the facts on the critical situation to their members now employed in less essential industries and appeal to them to transfer to the urgent jobs," Mr. Green declared.

"Efforts will be made to protect the seniority and re-employment rights of such workers in their old jobs, so that they can readily return when the immediate emergency is over.

Mr. Green stressed that in some of the plants low wages are the cause of the lag in manpower recruiting. In many foundries, for example, not only is the work "hot, heavy and dirty," but wages are low. That condition must be corrected. He called for rapid adjustment of such wages by the National War Labor Board so as to remove production bottle-necks in the foundry industry.

Past cut-backs are also to blame for the sudden crisis in some plants, President Green made it clear. For instance, certain factories making small arms and heavy ammunitions were shut down some time ago; now the army needs them badly and must recruit a new force of workers for them.

In some instances, Green said, employers had already reverted to civilian production and balked at taking new army orders. They have to be persuaded to convert back to war production, he explained.

However, despite all these problems the AFL will do all in its power to call attention "over the hump" in the critical months, Mr. Green emphasized.

"We've done it before and we'll do it again," he said. He announced that Lewis G. Hines AFL legislative representative and former Secretary of Labor in Pennsylvania, had been assigned to take charge of the manpower campaign and "see it through."

RUSSIANS SPONSOR GERMAN LABOR DRAFT

London, England.—A Soviet-sponsored plan for controlling the employment of all able-bodied Germans during the period of occupation of the Allied armies was reported to be under consideration here by the authorities engaged in drafting the program that will guide the Allied Control Commission in Berlin.

The first call on this labor would be given to rebuilding factories, homes, railways, and communications in areas once ruled by German arms—Russia, Poland and Holland among them.

Delegates Show Leadership In Adopting Many Constructive Policies To Speed Victory

New Orleans.—With striking leadership and constructive patriotism, the 64th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor set the pace for the nation by a series of important decisions designed to win the war more quickly and safeguard the peace more securely.

Outstanding convention actions were:

1—Authorized President Green to lead an AFL committee to the White House to impress upon President Roosevelt the urgency of a break in the wage freeze for immediate justice to American workers and to buttress post-war purchasing power.

2—Called for new conferences to bring about a united labor movement in America by reaffiliation of CIO unions and the United Mine Workers Union with the AFL.

3—Drafted concrete steps to boost production of vital war equipment items in which shortages now exist.

4—Strongly reaffirmed the federation's policy against job discrimination because of race, color or creed.

5—By action of the Executive Council, refused to participate in a so-called "World Labor Conference" called by the British Trades Union Congress because "dual" organizations and unions that are neither bona fide nor free were invited to participate.

Just about the strongest attacks of the convention were directed at the "Little Steel" formula and other wage-shackling policies of the administration.

A report of the resolutions committee, unanimously adopted, assailed the "Little Steel" formula as a betrayal of the understanding whereby labor suspended its use of the right to strike for the duration on the assurance that wage disputes would be decided on their merits.

Freezing of wages by "one-man edict" has been followed by the report said, by the "most disgraceful spectacle" of the majority of the War Labor Board in refusing "even to recommend" any alleviation of the wage freezing policies.

"Thus, at the end of the third year of government regulation of labor," the report declared, "the workers of the nation find themselves enmeshed in laws of Congress, executive orders of the President, edicts of the directors of Economic Stabilization, and directives of the National War Labor Board. Yet, the federal government is unable to obtain acknowledgment from the federal government of the simple fact that the pre-war standard of living for workers is rapidly deteriorating."

The convention instructed President Green to name a representative committee to call on FDR and request that he issue an executive order "which will realistically adjust the 'Little Steel' formula in line with the increased cost of living and permit employers and employes to effectuate the newly established policy by voluntary agreement without submission to the War Labor Board."

Denunciation of the "Little Steel" yardstick and of WLB methods came from many union chieftains.

Secretary-Treasurer George Meany pointed out that in a case decided last week by the board, involving CIO Steel Workers, only a "few crumbs" were thrown out by the board and the "Little Steel" formula left untouched.

Only accepted wage controls on conditions that democratic methods prevail in their application, Meany said. "We did not agree to having the War Labor Board ruled by executive order. We are continuing our battle to have the 'Little Steel' formula adjusted.

"However, we will not jeopardize the war effort. Whichever way the decision goes we will not rock the boat, but we have the right to go on demanding justice, and that we will do."

Wage adjustments now are necessary if workers are to enter the post-war period with sufficient purchasing power to assure full employment, Meany said.

"It is a refinement of cruelty for a public official to go on the air and promise 60,000,000 post-war jobs and yet not do something about this matter of purchasing power," Meany asserted. He charged that it was a "damnable lie" to infer such jobs could be provided without first raising wage levels.

Among other labor chiefs who made similar attacks upon the War Labor Board and the administration's wage policies were President Harvey W. Brown, of the International Association of Machinists and President James M. Duffy of the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters.

To promote unity, the convention adopted a report which deplored the increase of "discord and confusion in the ranks of labor, and of "raiding" by the CIO.

However, regardless of the hostile attitude of the CIO, the report stressed the need of "exploring every avenue which would lead to unity." It pointed out that many in the "rank and file" of the CIO regret the disunity and that the time is ripe for these men and women, despite rebuffs they may be encountered, to work steadily for conferences leading to consummation of unity."

To the mine workers, the convention instructed President Green to renew an invitation to that organization to reaffiliate.

Many union leaders also supported the utility report, the strongest plea coming from President Green. He declared the AFL has always endeavored to erect a united labor movement and charged "no greater injustice was ever done to the mass of workers than when the split occurred."

"If we are divided in the post-war period it is not the leaders of labor who will suffer but the mass of workers," he said.

As for John L. Lewis, Green made it clear he was willing to overlook former differences and welcome him who risk their lives in the coal mines, back in the federation, "not one of whom has been the object of such ascent as was heaped upon me," Mr. Green said. "But I am able to rise above that.

"I'm willing to forget it all and bring back the organizations which left the American Federation of Labor—bring them back on a fair and just basis and in a way that will protect the rights of other organizations in the federation. What is necessary in the interests of unity, I am willing to step down as your president."

Many other significant resolutions were adopted by the delegates, calling for:

Adequate labor representation at the peace table.

Labor participation in Department of Labor preparation of the cost of living index.

Repeal of a federal anti-lynching law. Repeal of the provision of the tax laws requiring unions to make financial reports to the government. Repeal of the vicious Smith-Connally act. Freedom of speech on the air. Federal legislation abolishing poll taxes. Exemption of all annuities from income taxes. Salary increases for postal employes and other government workers.

Legislation to forbid pay for overtime to government workers. Also, payment of prevailing wages on all housing insured by the FHA. Denial of federal funds to municipalities which require teachers to sign "yellow dog" contracts.

Active interstate organizing of women workers and greater efforts to obtain "equal pay for equal work."

Support of the railroad brotherhoods on legislation to liberalize the railroad retirement and railroad unemployment insurance acts.

Production Results Exceed Goals, Adm. Moreell Tells AFL Delegates

New Orleans.—American workers have wrought a "modern miracle" in war production, Vice Admiral Ben Moreell, chief of the Navy Department's Bureau of Yards and Docks, told delegates at the American Federation of Labor convention here.

"The production of material of war has far exceeded even our own expectations," he said. "We have smothered the dire predictions of our enemies in an avalanche of implements of victory. . . . This country has shown to the world what is admitted by all, friend and foe, to be a prodigy of production."

Moreell appealed for still greater effort by the nation's workers to meet the increased demands of the armed forces, and then wound up by insisting that labor should have an effective voice in the councils of government and industry" after the war.

"Labor should share in determining basic national policies . . . and in responsibility for making them work," he said. "A strong, virtuous, dynamic labor movement is our greatest safeguard against totalitarianism and despotism. Such a movement is the keystone in the arch of democracy."